

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 28, 2017

The Honorable Ajit Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

I write to express my serious concerns surrounding the recent bomb threats made against Jewish Community Centers (JCCs) in New York and across the country. These senseless, hateful attacks are unacceptable and should be investigated thoroughly and expediently. I urge you to do everything in your power to track these perpetrators down and prevent future attacks.

As you may know, on Monday, February 27, 2017, bomb threats were simultaneously made to JCCs in 11 states across the nation. According to the JCC Association of North America, which is based in New York, the threats were called into schools and JCCs in Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. In my home state of New York, JCCs in Long Island, Staten Island, and Westchester were evacuated following the anonymous threats, leading local police to exhaust precious resources to vacate premises and investigate the threat, none of which led to a substantive claim.

This is not the first incident of its kind. In fact, since the beginning of 2017, there have been 69 incidents at 54 JCCs in 27 states, in addition to one Canadian providence. Monday's incident makes this the fifth wave of threats in the past two months. The damage from these threats is far-reaching, often disrupting our classrooms and requiring the deployment of bomb squads and other SWAT equipment. As you can imagine, these attacks have traumatized the Jewish community and struck fear in homes across the country. It is worth noting that many JCCs across the country serve as nursery schools for their broader community, meaning that those terrorized by these threats are often preschoolers, their families, and the adults who care for them. We must do everything possible to ensure our religious communities feel safe from attacks against their schools, their homes, and their burial grounds.

The FCC has played a valuable role on this issue before. Last year, the Middletown School District of Middletown, NY, was similarly plagued by phone calls with terror threats, also known as "swatting." The school district was unable to track the perpetrators, who hid behind blocked numbers. In response, former FCC Chairman Wheeler worked with us to pass a special waiver to allow the District to access the caller information of the individuals placing the threats. The access enabled critical school personnel and law enforcement officials to coordinate with one another in their attempts to quickly respond to swatting calls made to the School District.

Given the recent uptick in these swatting incidents, I believe the current circumstances requires that your agency pursues similar extensive investigatory measures. In doing so, I urge you to coordinate your federal resources with local law enforcement across the nation to ensure they have the resources needed to thwart these attacks. In that vein, I respectfully inquire that you provide me and my staff with more information about the steps your agency will take to fulfill this request. Specifically, I ask:

1. What actions has your agency taken to date in response to these bomb threats?
2. Will you consider allowing JCCs to trace this call information, as the FCC did for the Middletown school district, in order to allow these calls to be properly investigated?
3. What resources can your agency provide to local law enforcement to ensure they are equipped to thwart these attacks?

I look forward to hearing from you and to working with you on ways to prevent these threats in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles E. Schumer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Charles E. Schumer